

COMMERCE NEWS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

International Trade Administration • Washington, DC 20230 • www.ita.doc.gov/media

For Immediate Release
Friday, October 8, 1999

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U.S. Department of Commerce and American Pathway Partners Announce Second Round of the American Pathways 2000 Program

Washington, D.C. -- The U.S. Department of Commerce's Office of Tourism Industries and its *American Pathways* partners today announced its second round of competition this year to encourage the development of new tourism itineraries highlighting the diverse culture and heritage within the United States.

To be considered for designation as an *American Pathways 2000* itinerary, tour operators must develop new, never-yet sold itineraries. Tour operators are to work in conjunction with destination marketers, such as state tourism offices and local convention and visitor bureaus, to develop and submit itineraries utilizing one of five official *American Pathways 2000* themes. The second round includes the new theme entitled *Food for the Soul*, which focuses on showcasing ethnically derived traditional foods through itineraries which include stopovers at ethnic restaurants or ethnic food festivals featuring these foods.

"The *American Pathways 2000* program is designed to offer travelers worldwide a collection of some of America's best kept secrets," said U.S. Secretary of Commerce William M. Daley. "These tours will surprise, educate, entertain and enlighten."

The other four previously announced themes are: *From Sea to Shining Sea* (showcasing the indigenous peoples of America), *I Have a Dream* (telling the story of the strife for a true democracy from slavery to civil rights), *Lady Liberty* (spotlighting the influences of immigration in the building of America), and *America's Cultural Mosaic* (highlighting the ethnic influences in American "Pop Culture").

Applications, instructions, and criteria may be obtained from the U.S. Department of Commerce or downloaded at <http://tinet.ita.doc.gov> and clicking on the *American Pathways 2000* logo. All applications must be postmarked by November 8th. Itineraries designated in Round 2 will be featured on the official *American Pathways 2000* website, sponsored by Alamo Rent-A-Car. Operators developing and selling itineraries will be able to use the official *American Pathways 2000* logo in marketing their designated itineraries. Designations for Round 2 will be made in Spring 2000.

The American Pathways includes the National Tour Association (NTA), the American Bus Association (ABA), the U.S. Tour Operators Association (USTOA), the Receptive Services Association (RSA), and the International Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus (IACVB). More information is available at <http://www.americanpathways.com>.

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